

Approved 11/17/21

Gilmanton Energy Committee
Gilmanton Academy Building

October 20, 2021

Present: Nate Abbott, Aimee Ruiter, Cyndi Paulin, Sue Hale-de Seve, Vincenzo Sisti, Dick de Seve, Elise Smith, Sarah Thorne,

Meeting began at 6:30 p.m.

Nate made the obligatory opening announcements.

Minutes: Minutes from the September meeting were reviewed. Nate moved, Sarah seconded their approval. Approved.

Sarah reviewed the Committee's presentation to the Selectmen. Our representative from RBG began with a presentation of the results of the audit. Discussed the need for additional funding to be added to the original proposal, additional discussion of the audit and proposal. Few questions from the Selectmen. Discussed that NH Electric Coop and NH Saves program would be likely to rebate some funds to us, including up to 50% of the cost of the LED lighting. Weatherization investment may yield additional 35% rebate.

Sarah suggested working on building public support through newspaper article, reaching out in various ways. Nate discussed Town of Warner's efforts and their successes to show how we can be successful in this program. Warner is slightly larger than Gilmanton, has a larger tax base. If we can find somewhat smaller towns that have solar reserve funds, as we propose, it would help build support with the Selectmen and the budget committee. Dick explained the Conservation Commission's process for requesting increases in the budget by discussing the programs we hope to fund with the additional funds requested. Nate will email Heather Carpenter to put our proposals on the Town website and offer our assistance to the Selectmen with any additional questions. Nate is willing to draft a letter to the editor to get into the papers prior to the end of October. Nate and Sarah will work on the letter to the editor. Sarah asked if anyone would be willing to lead the effort to find what other towns are doing. Aimee found an article online concerning what other towns in New Hampshire are doing with solar programs. Sarah sent around an article about Hanover's efforts to expand their municipal and residential solar efforts. Lebanon is doing similar programs with solar panels on all their municipal buildings.

Nate thanked everyone for their input on town energy initiatives.

Solarize Campaign: Nate read an email into the record from Vincenzo Sisti and Connor Sanborn that Sunflower will extend the campaign until the end of the year so that additional proposals and contracts will be eligible for reductions based on the number of contracts signed, as per the original proposal. Vincenzo sent an email stating they still have 12 contracts, have extended the program to the end of the year. He asked if the Committee would be willing to put out a newspaper, other article to build support for the program. He also noted that the Planning Board is re-visiting the solar ordinance to look at its application to ground mounted systems, considering relaxing certain standards in the ordinance. Sarah suggested reaching out to owners of ground mounted systems to determine what effect the current

ordinance has had on their whole process. Nate briefly described their experience with their ground mounted system. Their process was extended several months due to the Planning Board could put them on their agenda. That delayed the installation as the installer will not begin the process unless the Planning Board has granted approval for the system. The Planning Board granted approval fairly quickly once the proposal came before them.

Sarah discussed whether certain Federal funding coming to Gilmanton might be available for solar; Sarah doesn't believe they would apply, but we should look at that fund again to determine that.

Community Power Coalition: Nate saw an article in the Concord Monitor about the Town of Warner's efforts with alternative energy programs. Contract with a single power provider with residents' options for receiving power from different sources. Sarah said the program gives residents the option to buy into a solar community program if they can't do solar on their own properties. Several towns are doing this, including Lebanon. New program, we should watch and determine if this is something that would work to further our alternative energy needs. 13 towns and one county are now participating in this program. Nate said we will monitor these efforts to see if this program would work for Gilmanton.

Sue showed a latch hook Christmas tree skirt that she has made for Vincenzo, who saw one similar to it at Sue's and Dick's home recently.

Meeting adjourned 7:20 p.m. Dick motioned, Elise seconded the motion.

Next meeting November 17th, 2021 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dick de Seve, Secretary